



Teen Outreach Program (TOP) in Montana:

What is TOP?

TOP is a youth development program designed by Wyman Center, a youth serving organization that has been providing effective, outcome-based programming for over 110 years.

Wyman's Teen Outreach Program is a national program for teens whose effectiveness has been proven in 30 years of operation. Wyman's TOP is currently being administered in over 400 organizations and schools in the United States, Virgin Islands and United Kingdom.

Effectiveness:

According to Wyman, students who complete TOP experience:

Evidence based:

- 52% lower risk of school suspension
- 60% lower risk of course failure
- 53% lower risk of pregnancy

Observed:

- 60% lower risk of school dropout

How it works:

Wyman's TOP works a tested framework for creating or enhancing local youth development efforts. TOP is one of only a few programs proven effective in both increasing school success and preventing teen pregnancy

There are three essential goals that every teen in the TOP program can build a foundation of success from:

Healthy Behaviors - Positive, constructive actions that allow young people to be successful now and later in life.

Life Skills - Competencies necessary to grow into healthy, self-sustaining adults.

Sense of Purpose - Knowledge of their own worth as they contribute to their communities through meaningful service.

For more information on Wyman and Wyman's TOP, please visit: www.wymancenter.org and www.wymantop.org

What is Youth Development?

Youth development programs are designed to improve and develop life skills in adolescents and teens.

Youth development programs focus on the positive attributes of youth and their abilities and helps empower youth to make good decisions by learning the skills to do so, rather than focusing solely on the negative problem that might exist, such as poor school performance.

An effective youth development program focuses on:

- creating a safe and caring space for participants
- helping participants experience ownership and belonging to the group and community
- creating quality relationships with adults, peers and community members
- development of conflict resolution skills
- recognition of participants' accomplishments and abilities.

When combined, these skills allow teens to make healthy decisions regarding sex activity and drug and alcohol use, increases school graduation and continuance to post secondary education rates, builds ties to the community and helps teens become successful members of society.

What is happening in Montana?

Planned Parenthood of Montana is a member of The Northwest Coalition for Adolescent Health (NWCAH). NWCAH is a recipient of an Office of Adolescent Health teen pregnancy prevention grant, which will allow NWCAH partners to provide the Teen Outreach Program to over 8,000 students in the Northwest over the next five years.

TOP will be replicated in five communities in Montana: Great Falls, Missoula, Belgrade, Livingston and Helena.

All facilitators have been trained and certified to meet the standards of TOP.

For more information regarding Teen Outreach Program in Montana, please contact:

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